



NEWS FROM
ULSTER COUNTY
County Executive Jen Metzger

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Amid Global Increase in Cases, Ulster County Department of Health Urges Residents to Get Vaccinated Against Measles

NO KNOWN CASES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED IN ULSTER COUNTY

KINGSTON, NY - As measles cases continue to rise globally, the Ulster County Department of Health urges residents to take proactive steps to protect themselves, their loved ones, and their community by getting vaccinated against measles.

In 2024, there were 285 measles cases reported in the United States; thus far this year, according to the CDC, more than 164 measles cases have been reported in nine states, including two cases in New York City as well as cases in New Jersey, Rhode Island, Alaska, California, Georgia, New Mexico, Texas and Kentucky. More than 80% of cases are among youth under the age of 20, with 30% of cases among children under five. One quarter of cases resulted in hospitalizations.

No one infected had completed the two doses of the MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella) vaccination cycle; 95% were fully unvaccinated and the remaining had only one dose of the vaccine. [One unvaccinated child in Texas has died.](#)

There are **no** current cases of measles identified in Ulster County. As of January 1, the [New York State Immunization Information System](#) shows significantly disparate rates of measles (MMR) vaccination in Ulster County, ranging as high as 100% and as low as 57% across our municipalities.

“The MMR vaccine is the most effective way to prevent measles,” **said Ulster County Public Health Director Eve Walter.** “The vaccine is recommended for children from 12 to 15 months

of age, with a second dose given at four to six years of age. Adults who have not had the MMR vaccine or have not had a documented case of measles can also get vaccinated. The Ulster County Department of Health provides vaccines free of charge for residents who lack insurance coverage.”

“Measles is a preventable disease, and the best way to protect yourself and children from measles is to be fully vaccinated,” **said Dr. Gina Carena, Ulster County Department of Health Medical Director.** “Completion of two doses of MMR is needed and found to be at least 97% effective. While there are occasionally unsubstantiated claims about vaccine safety, it is important to understand that every ingredient in these vaccines is important to assure the vaccine is safe and effective and, in many cases, the ingredients are in doses lower than those we are naturally exposed to in our environment. We urge everyone to take the necessary steps to protect themselves and their community by getting vaccinated.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), measles is a highly contagious and serious disease that can cause severe health complications, including pneumonia, encephalitis, and can be life-threatening. Typical symptoms include tiny white spots in the mouth, a rash, high fever, cough, runny nose and sore throat. In recent years, the number of measles cases has increased significantly, with outbreaks reported in multiple countries, including the United States.

“Being vaccinated is especially important if travelling to an outbreak area, such as New York City, Texas, New Mexico, or Canada, as well as international travel,” **said County Public Health Director Walter.** “If you note symptoms consistent with measles, please contact Ulster County Department of Health and speak with one of our communicable disease nurses. If you plan to bring someone to an emergency room or urgent care with suspected measles, please contact the healthcare facility first so that appropriate infection control precautions can be put into place.”

For additional information, visit

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/measles/>, and for any questions, contact the Ulster County Department of Health at 845-340-3070.

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